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HUSBANDS' AND FATHERS' ASSOCIATION,

JANUARY, 1842.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

HUSBANDS' AND FATHERS' ASSOCIATION,

AND THE

REPORT

7551.176

READ AT THE EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY,

JANUARY, 1842.

PRINTED FOR THE USE OF THE MEMBERS.

BOSTON:

PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN, 24 CONGRESS STREET.

1842.

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CONSTITUTION.

1. This Association shall be called the Husbands' and Fathers' Association.

2. The principal object of this Association shall be by prayer, counsel and benevolent action, to promote the piety and usefulness of its members, their families and neighbors.

3. The members of this Association shall be the persons who originally sign this Constitution, and such others as may, thereafter, be elected, by a unanimous ballot of the members.

4. The meetings of this Association shall be held weekly, at such time and place as may be appointed, and shall be continued one hour precisely.

5. The members shall preside at the meetings in alphabetical order, and shall be called upon to pray in the same order, and the presiding member shall feel himself under special obligation to prepare himself, beforehand, for the meeting, by prayer, selection of Scripture, psalms and hymns, and also to be present, at least five minutes, before the time appointed for the meeting; and if he cannot attend,

he shall notify the next in order of his intended absence.

6. The presiding member shall open the meeting with prayer, the object of which shall be to implore the divine blessing upon the meeting; and the members of the Association shall feel themselves bound to pray particularly during the week for the family of him who presided at the last meeting. And whereas the family of Mrs. —— cannot be represented at this meeting, and the family of —— is not at present represented; it is agreed that their families shall be especially remembered, during the week in which their names occur, in alphabetical order, and the persons presiding on such weeks, shall be taken in alphabetical order.

7. The meeting shall be conducted, generally in the following manner; it shall be opened with prayer, reading of the Scriptures, and singing; time shall then be allowed for statements concerning the families of the members; after which there shall be two prayers in succession, the first for husbands and wives, the second for parents and children. Time shall then be given for consultation and devising plans of usefulness; after which there shall be two prayers and singing the doxology, with which the meeting shall close.

8. The members of this Association believe, that the prayers above mentioned, should not exceed five minutes each, and the reading of the Scriptures and singing five minutes; and they will therefore en-

deavor to act accordingly, in discharging the duties which devolve upon them in this meeting.

9. In the fear of the Lord and in hope of promoting his glory, we sign our names as members of this Association.

January 1, 1834.

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

1. Prayer for the divine blessing on the meeting, not more than five minutes.

2. Reading the Scriptures and singing, not more than five minutes.

3. Statement concerning families, not more than ten minutes.

4 and 5. Prayer for husbands and wives, not more than five minutes. Prayer for parents and children, not more than five minutes.

6. Consultation and designs of usefulness, not more than fifteen minutes.

7 and 8. Two prayers in succession, objects not specified, not more than ten minutes.

9. Doxology.

Whole time not more than one hour.

ANNUAL MEETING.

On the sixth day of January, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and forty-two, the parents and children of the Association, with a very few invited friends, numbering eighty-four in all, assembled to celebrate their Eighth Anniversary, and the exercises of the evening were as follows:

Singing the hymn commencing

"Our souls by love together knit,
Cemented, mix'd in one;
One hope, one heart, one mind, one voice,
'Tis heaven on earth begun."

Reading the twelfth chapter of Romans.
Prayer. Reading the Report. A short Address.
Singing the hymn commencing

"Sing, ye redeemed of the Lord,
Your great Deliverer sing:
Pilgrims, for Zion's city bound,
Be joyful in your King."

Closing with the Christian doxology.
The remainder of the evening was spent in social enjoyment.
The Report is as follows:—

The Association of families, as now constituted, was formed on the first day of January, eighteen hundred and thirty-four; but it had its origin in the autumn of the year eighteen hundred and thirty, when seven of the ladies now composing this circle,

associated together to meet once a week for social prayer. At subsequent times, four other ladies were added to the circle, all of whom are members of the same church.

At the close of eighteen hundred and thirty-three, the husbands of the ladies first above referred to, with one exception, agreed to form a similar Association for prayer, and to meet weekly, on the afternoons of the days the ladies held their meetings.

They are held on the Friday afternoon of every week, and the times of holding them have never been altered. During the eight years which are now completed since the formation of the Association of the gentlemen, there have been four hundred and fifteen Fridays, and on four hundred and twelve of them, the regular meeting has been held; and in the three which failed, the occasion was from mistake and accident, and not through forgetfulness or design, and the average attendance during the whole time has been six, nearly two thirds of the whole number,—showing that such a meeting can be sustained where the disposition exists. The whole attendance during the eight years has been two thousand four hundred and sixty-three—averaging three hundred and eight a year. The parents and children meet once a year, and the average attendance at the family meetings has been fifty-nine; but this attendance has been regularly on the increase.

The number of families now connected is twelve; parents, twenty-two; and children, sixty-four; in

all, eighty-six. The number of meetings during the year eighteen hundred and forty-one, has been fifty-three,—the year commencing and ending with Friday. The whole attendance has been two hundred and ninety-one, and the average attendance between five and six.

As in former years, we are still called upon to express our gratitude to our heavenly Father, for great favors bestowed upon us, in the general health of our families, in our temporal mercies, and in our spiritual blessings. Five of our children have been added to the church during the past year, and now of the sixty-four children belonging to the Association, thirty-seven are members of the visible church, and of the remaining number, twenty-seven, eleven may perhaps be considered too young to enter into that solemn relation, even if giving evidence of piety. But we are sorry to record that the unconverted children generally do not exhibit that seriousness of mind, and that sense of religious obligation, which are so gratifying to the parent's heart. Still we would manifest our confidence in the promises of our covenant God, and would rely on his grace that these children may all be born again. Under God, however, much, very much we believe, depends on the faithfulness of parents towards their God and towards their children.

The majority of these families have now been associated for eight years as members of the same church and of the same circle, the subjects of each other's prayers, the sharers of innumerable blessings,

and having abundant proof of the loving kindness of the Lord. But we have not been without changes, in the withdrawal of some families and in the addition of others; in the marriage of children; in the fluctuations of property, and in occasional and sometimes distressing sickness in our houses. In the midst of enjoyments, we have had many warnings that this is not our home.

It has been repeatedly observed by us, how remarkably our families have been preserved from the stroke of the great destroyer. One death only, and that of a little child of seventeen months, having occurred during our connection, and that upwards of seven years since.

But we are led on this returning anniversary, to reflect that eight years have been added to our lives since we first met as a circle, and with some of us the infirmities of age begin to be apparent, and soon we may say with pious Job, "I would not live alway." According to the wise though inscrutable arrangements of Providence, our hitherto well nigh unbroken circle will ere long be rudely rent asunder. One after another will receive the final summons, till after the flight of a few more years, instead of speaking of the continued lives of the members; those who compose the Association, if it then remain, will look around and recollect how few of the original members yet survive, and will anticipate the day when those last also shall be gathered to their fathers.

Let us then for a few moments take another view

of this circle. Let us feel as the fact requires, that we are hastening with accelerated velocity to the goal—that sickness and death will invade our dwellings—and the voice of joy and gladness give place to the sounds of lamentation and wo. But while we watch the rising clouds, and see them gather over our earthly prospects, we should bear in mind there is a land of unclouded sunshine, of which it may be said,

"No chilling winds, no poisonous breath,
Shall reach that healthful shore,
Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more."

Often has the idea passed through the mind of the writer, Shall this circle meet in Heaven?—Surely the grace of God is sufficient; for He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? What a momentous inquiry! Shall this circle meet on the Hills of the Heavenly Zion, and drink together of the fountains of immortality?—Under God, much, very much depends upon the choice we ourselves may make.

We look around us and say—since the little babe was called home by Him who doeth all things well,—who shall be the first of this number to pass through the dark valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil. Shall it be some aged member who has borne much of the heat and burden of the day, or some child, who has known few of the cares of life—who can tell? Perhaps some aged

matron of this association—perhaps some lovely boy shall be the leader of this little flock to receive the token of the Good Shepherd's love—and by him, shall be appointed one of the ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation—a youthful angel, glowing in the first bloom of heavenly beauty, and radiant with light; whose sweet office it shall be to open the gates of the celestial Eden to those of this circle who shall be numbered among the followers of the Lamb—and what language can express the joy of the delighted seraph who shall thus welcome his earthly parents to their eternal home; or of the heavenly matron, who shall receive into her heaving bosom the son of her love, as he presents himself at the portals of the golden city with the credentials of his king. And shall it, can it be, that the families of this association, husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, shall one day meet in heaven. As the circle widens, shall one after another add a new link to the living chain, till at length with tears of heavenly joy, the last pilgrim shall present his roll, and receive the amaranthine crown.

"The Lamb who dwells amidst the throne,
Shall o'er us still preside—
Feed us with nourishment divine,
And all our footsteps guide.

"'Mong pastures green, he 'll lead our way,
Where living streams appear;
And God the Lord, from all our eyes
Shall wipe off every tear."

But while we thus for a few moments dip our pen "in the fountain of eternal love," let us bear in mind that our God is no respecter of persons—that to him only that overcometh will he give to eat of the tree of life—that broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat—to the place prepared for the devil and his angels. To use the language of Cowper, "there is somewhere in infinite space, a world that does not roll within the precincts of mercy; and as it is reasonable and even scriptural to suppose, that there is music in heaven; in those dismal regions, perhaps, the reverse of it is found—tones so dismal as to make wo itself more insupportable, and to acuminate even despair."

Let us then labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life—and set our affections on things above, that where our treasure is, there our hearts may be also; and in the words of the Psalmist we conclude. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments.—As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forever more."

HUSBANDS' AND FATHERS' ASSOCIATION,

JANUARY, 1843.

REPORT

OF THE

HUSBANDS' AND FATHERS' ASSOCIATION,

READ AT

7551.176

THE NINTH ANNIVERSARY,

JANUARY, 1843.

PRINTED FOR THE USE OF THE MEMBERS.

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ANNUAL MEETING.

Tuesday, January 3, 1843. The families of the Association met this evening at the house of one of the members, to celebrate their ninth anniversary agreeably to their usual custom. There were present in the whole 80 persons; the last year there were 84,—20 of whom were not present on this occasion, showing the changes in attendance between last year and this.

The exercises of the evening were as follow :—

Singing the 9th Village Hymn, beginning

Awake my soul to joyful lays,
And sing your great Redeemer's praise.

Tune—"Loving Kindness."

Reading a portion of Scripture. John 14th chapter 1st verse to the 7th, and 13th to the 27th, inclusive.

Prayer.

The Report.

A short Address.

Singing the 442d Hymn from "Watts and Select Hymns."

Jerusalem, my happy home.

Tune—"Balerma."

Closing with Benediction by the pastor.

The remainder of the evening was spent in social enjoyment.

The Report is as follows :—

The opening of the new year ushers in another anniversary of this Association ; and its members are again permitted to meet—husbands and wives, parents and children, to rejoice together in the loving kindness of the Lord. Though we have experienced some changes during the past year, yet our numbers remain very nearly the same as in former years—parents and children together amounting to eighty-one. Since the last annual meeting, one family has withdrawn from the Association, and one death and one birth have occurred. Two of the children of the circle have intermarried, and one has been licensed to preach the gospel.

In regard to our temporal mercies, they have, as in former years, been very great ; and the Lord's spiritual blessings have not been wholly withdrawn as it respects our children, two of whom, the past year, have been united with the church, making at this time, thirty-five of the children who are professors of religion. But we have great occasion for humiliation, when we behold so many of them still standing aloof from the church, and who give so little marked attention to the precious invitations of the gospel, and who thus, we fear, obstruct the path of those that are younger. Do the parents sufficiently feel it as they ought that so many of the

children are still on the side of the world? Do the pious brothers and sisters think of it with the interest it deserves? Is there not a want of fervent prayer and appropriate labor in their behalf? These suggestions are thrown out, that the parents and children may lay it to heart, and feel they have a work to do, and may also remember that the promises of God are not made to the slothful and the indifferent. This subject is one of vital importance to the Association; for how can they expect to meet in heaven, who are not united on earth.

Our respected friend who has for many years discharged the office of Secretary, in a manner most grateful and satisfactory to us, has resigned her trust, in consequence of new duties she has undertaken in her marriage the last autumn. We had relied upon having her and her respected husband as our guests at this meeting; but circumstances have rendered it inconvenient for them to leave home. In a letter lately received from her, in which our anniversary is mentioned, she writes, "Present my kind remembrance to the members of your Association. It would have given me great pleasure to meet them, and I should be truly happy to welcome any of them to my house."

This Association has now closed the ninth year since its formation. At our former meetings we have had occasion to remark upon the mercy of the Lord, in respect to the continued lives of all the

families, and that with the exception of the removal of an infant in the month of August, 1834, death had not been permitted to disturb our dwellings. The Lord had commanded the destroying angel to put up his sword into his sheath as he approached our habitations. But on our last anniversary we were more deeply impressed with the fact, that this particular mercy might not be longer continued, and that our healthy body might soon receive a wound; and in that anticipation we might look forward to the time, when, after a breach was once made, our numbers in a few short years might rapidly diminish, till at length with anxious solicitude we should look at the survivors and ask, Who shall next be called? As to the commencement of this breach, our conjectures were but too well founded. The hollow cough, and hectic flush, and brilliant eye of the beloved youth then present, told, in touching eloquence, a tale too true; and called forth the silent tear in the prospect of the hastening time when that sweet smile should linger for the last time around those lovely lips, and those brilliant eyes should shed their departing radiance upon a beloved mother's face.

At half-past 9 o'clock of the evening of the 28th of February, 1842, C. W. E. received his kind Saviour's summons, and peaceful and happy, with the full possession of his senses, in his mother's bosom, committed his spirit unto Him who gave it;—and thus was transplanted one of the

loveliest plants of earth, to open its budding flowers and shed its fragrance in the paradise above.

It is pleasant to think and speak of those who die in the Lord; for when we mourn their loss, we do not mourn as those without hope. C. was born on the 23d of April, 1825; and three years since, no one of the children of our circle gave greater promise of vigor of constitution and length of life. But He who knows the end from the beginning, had, in his all-gracious purposes, other ends in view for this favored youth, and we bow with submission to his will.

It is not designed to give in detail the character of this young man, but merely to express our feeling sense of his excellencies, and to erect this simple monument to his memory in our records.

He was from infancy of a lovely countenance, and blessed with a happy disposition; and was trained up with pious solicitude in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He early gave evidence of distinguished talents, which were well developed in the progress of his education, and were the earnest of great usefulness and excellence in after life. But the culture of the mind did not interfere with that of his affections; and he was early taught the duty, and experienced the happiness, of obedience to his parents; and by strict integrity, undeviating truth, cheerful acquiescence in a father's will, and in affectionate intercourse with his companions, he merited and secured the love and esteem

of all who knew him. As a scholar, he stood in the first rank in a school where industry and talents alone receive marks of distinction; and he was well prepared in advance for entrance into that college which as a scholar he did not live to adorn. As a Sabbath school scholar—and he was one almost from his infancy—he was punctual, constant, diligent, and courteous; and he evinced, for one of his years, great, familiar, and accurate knowledge of the holy Scriptures in his mother tongue, far superior to many whose years greatly exceeded his. He showed very early a sense of religious truth, and also manifested a personal interest in the subject; and after a season of self-examination, serious deliberation and continued prayer, he obtained evidence satisfactory to himself, of his conversion of heart, and on the 7th of June, 1840, he publicly dedicated himself to God, and united himself with the church of Christ. His subsequent short life gave the sweet satisfaction to all his friends, and especially to those who knew and loved him best, that he continually grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is not our intention to trace his history in detail as his disease appeared, or to follow him to a southern clime, where his parents took him in the fond hope that a more genial atmosphere might not only stay, but eradicate the causes of his disease; or to wander with him among the beautiful hills and valleys of Berkshire, where, with Christian friends,

he greatly enjoyed the last autumn of his life ; nor to hover around his sick chamber which he irradiated with his smiles, and cheered with those pleasant sayings which threw a sunset lustre over the evening of his happy, though transient life.

But one short anecdote which is still music in our ears, ought not to be omitted in this pleasant circle, whose meetings he dearly loved. He was fond of music, and to cultivate his taste, he took lessons on the flute ; but afterwards, when his lungs were affected and he could no longer blow the flute with safety, his parents procured for his use a piano, with which he might continue to gratify his taste. But when he was confined to his chamber the instrument below became useless, and it was removed from the house. Hearing the noise made by the removal, and not knowing what it was, he inquired of his mother, and on being told, he said to her, with a heavenly smile upon his face, "Mother, my next instrument will be a harp." *Happy youth*, who thus with an eye of faith, and a heart and ear attuned to heavenly harmonies, could look forward to the hour when he also, with a harp of gold, and amidst vials full of odors, should join in the new and everlasting song to Him who redeemed him by his blood ; singing blessing and honor and glory and power unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. *Happy parents*, whom God has made the honored instruments of giving birth to such a child ;

rejoice that your son was continued to you so long; rejoice that you have been permitted to rear a plant for heaven. Lovely was he to the last, and as he lay on the bed of death in sweet and peaceful sleep, we could not but feel he slept in Jesus, and that the time will come, when his decaying body shall put on incorruption, and mortality be swallowed up of life. *Happy circle*, whose forerunners to the unseen, and—may we not be permitted to hope—the heavenly world, are a smiling infant and a lovely youth. The one, just in the opening dawn of her being—the other, in the fresh dew of morning; and each, we trust, an acceptable offering to the Lord of Hosts. How grateful should we be that we were not compelled to make the selection from our members of those who should precede the rest in passing through the valley of the shadow of death; yet how thrice grateful the reflection that the Saviour hath thus chosen of the lambs of his flock, and doth see in them of the travail of his soul and is satisfied.

The great and glorious designs of God in the creation, conversion, and early removal of the beloved youth, we are not yet permitted to know; but we rejoice in the belief that we shall know hereafter; and it will, we doubt not, be seen that his Saviour thus early called him to the enjoyment of higher and nobler spheres of usefulness and happiness in that heavenly country which is promised to the righteous, and in that glorious city

which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. But we may certainly believe that one of the many designs of his existence is, to hold up to the youthful members of this circle the example of him who early feared and loved the Lord, and to say to them, while speaking through him, Go and do thou likewise; with the sweet assurance, which the Lord holds out, that in his father's house are many mansions, and that he hath gone to prepare a place, among others, for all of this circle who obey and love him.

It being the first death that has occurred amongst us for so many years, we feel constrained to give it this special place in the simple annals of our family meetings—and may these annals long contain the record of those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

As we have thus noticed the only death, so we may be allowed to mention the birth which has occurred during the year. The Lord having thus repaired our breach in adding another son to the circle, as a grateful memorial of love for the departed youth, he is permitted to bear the name of C. E. And may the mantle of the departed saint drop upon his little namesake, and he be spared by his gracious Saviour long enough to give the same delightful evidence of being made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.

And now, brethren and sisters, let us gird up the

loins of our minds, and as we know not what a day, and surely not what a year, may bring forth, let us enter upon this new year with fresh alacrity in the service of our Master, that when he cometh and knocketh, he may be able to say—Blessed are these my servants whom I have found watching. And that it may be written when we are called away,—

"All is tranquil and serene, calm and undisturbed repose.
There no cloud can intervene—there no angry tempest blows!
Every tear is wiped away, sighs no more shall heave the breast;
Night is lost in endless day—sorrow, in eternal rest."

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HUSBANDS AND FATHERS' ASSOCIATION

January, 1845.

ANNUAL MEETING.

Tuesday, January 7, 1845, the families of the Association met at the house of one of the members, to celebrate their eleventh anniversary. There were present at the meeting seventy-one persons. The exercises of the evening were as follows: —

Singing the 215th Village Hymn, commencing

'How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord.' Tune, *Iddo.*

Reading a portion of Scripture; Colossians, third chapter.

Prayer. Report. A short Address.

Singing the 600th Village Hymn, commencing

'High in yonder realms of light.' Tune, *Wilmot.*

Closing with Benediction by the Pastor.

After which, the evening was passed in social enjoyment.

The Committee appointed by the husbands of the Association present the following Report: —

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REPORT.

It is now eleven years since this association of gentlemen was formed. It received its impression and character from the existing union of the better half of themselves, their wives — who had met weekly for prayer and Christian fellowship for some years previous.

At or near the commencement of the year after its formation, the families of the circle, at the suggestion of one of the ladies, met together for the interchange of those friendly salutations, for which such a weekly intercourse of the heads of the families had kindly prepared the way — and the meeting proved so pleasant to both parents and children, that it was unanimously agreed to assemble again on the opening of succeeding years.

In pursuance of this resolution, the anniversaries have been held from year to year until the last; when, from a combination of various causes, it was passed by, but not without regret on the part of many of its members.

It cannot have escaped the grateful recollection of the elder members of the circle, with what an even flow the years passed along; and how kind a hand conducted us on our continued journey. No break marred the symmetry of our circle — no household was clad in the garments of mourning. Like some peaceful river, the current glided imperceptibly along, without a rapid or a shoal. But at length the murmur of the disturbed waters began to strike upon the ear — the Lord began to teach us practically, that this is not our rest.

Since the annual meeting of January, 1843, he has sent his summons, and two of our highly valued circle, Mrs. S. and Mrs. W., have been called away; nor have they gone alone — nor did they first retire; the one was preceded by a beloved son, and the other by a lovely daughter — so that each parent, we may hope, found a delighted child in waiting, to give them more than a filial greeting. O what a recognition was that. I fancy I can hear each say, in tones of rapture — 'Dear mother,

have you come? Are you at length released from your earthly pilgrimage? Welcome, thrice welcome, to your heavenly home!' To feel that they have reached that peaceful shore, where no hostile foot shall ever tread — that land where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest — that they have passed all danger, have overcome the last enemy, and are meeting to part no more; that they have entered a country where no inhabitant shall ever say, 'I am sick;' where their eyes shall see the king in his beauty, and their hearts rejoice in a Saviour's love — well may they exclaim, the half was not told us. But how tame the pen that attempts to describe such a scene. No mortal tongue can tell, nor heart conceive, the joys of such a meeting. Let us who are on this side the dark valley rest in hope, that beyond those gloomy shades there is a house with many mansions — there lives a friend who has gone to prepare a place for them that love him — one that remembers both parents and children, and will one day unite them to himself and to one another, in the indissoluble bonds of perfect love.

I cannot draw out in detail the character of our departed friends. This is neither the time nor the place — but in accordance with our feelings, and our former usage, we cannot let the occasion pass without saying a few words of those who were held in so much regard.

Mrs. S. was no common character. An only daughter, brought up in the midst of affluence, surrounded by all the enjoyments the world could afford, she early took a stand on the Lord's side, and hers was a decided choice. It was not with irresolute purpose, nor with a heart half inclined to turn back to pleasures she had relinquished — but it was a fixed determination to be the Lord's. And in her Christian course, though travelling in a path beset with difficulties, she was ever onward — she had set her eye on the 'mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ.' She seemed to have taken counsel of a wise master, and to have counted the cost, before she made her profession — and, in conformity with her first resolution, to have persevered to the end. Her heart overflowed with Christian kindness, and her hands were ever active to accomplish her benevo-

lent designs — and, like Job of old, in her measure, she was 'eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame.' But her deeds of benevolence were not confined to the temporal wants of those who stood in need of her charity. It was not enough with her to clothe the naked and to feed the hungry, with the common comforts, but she felt for their spiritual necessities — a hunger and nakedness, though not so visible, yet far more pressing than bodily wants — and she administered the consolations of the gospel to those who engaged her pity.

But, as I said before, hers was no common character. Not content with doing good to those around her, she enlarged the sphere of her vision, and with an eagle's eye viewed the world itself as one great poor-house — a hospital with tenants at once sinful and wretched — and she put up her fervent prayer for the world's conversion, and with her pen as well as by her personal persuasions, exerted an influence over the Christian community, which still continues, and will cause her long to be had in sweet remembrance. Her mind was fertile in inventions to do good; and, though her wisdom was not always, to the common eye, as conspicuous as was her zeal, yet there was a character in her designs, a unity of purpose, that impressed itself on all her movements, and marked her as an Israelite indeed. There was in her an affinity to all that was good in every Christian denomination, and she delighted in the communion of the saints. Like the beloved Persis, 'she labored much in the Lord,' and, with Priscilla, would have laid down her neck for the servants of Christ. And though the world may cry out fanaticism, and colder-blooded Christians may speak of her enthusiasm, yet they who knew her in her hours of prayer, and followed in her path of doing good, will speak of her as classed among those of whom the world was not worthy, and will look up to her as one who hath impressed a spirit on the community in which she lived; and under happier auspices would have graced the world she loved.

In her we have lost a faithful friend. But we mourn not as those without hope; for we feel, that through many trials, both of body and spirit, she received 'fresh supplies of grace while pressing on to God;' that 'she

fought a good fight, and hath finished her course,' and her sun went down in peace. And, we doubt not, that among the voices of the innumerable multitude, which will swell the everlasting anthem, there will be many who will be heard to call her blessed.

Her son W. died before her. She lived to hear him preach, and to look forward to his future usefulness as a faithful laborer — but her hopes were blighted, and she was called to watch in the sick chamber and to administer to the latest wants of her dying child — and she closed his eyes with a full belief in his piety, and that he also was brought into the fold of the Good Shepherd. Our personal acquaintance with him was slight, but, as a child of one of the circle, he had a constantly recurring place in their prayers, and was the subject of many aspirations, which we trust have been mingled in those golden vials full of odors which perfume the throne of the Lamb.

In the death of Mrs. W. our circle lost one of its best, and earliest, and most faithful friends. While her health permitted, she was constant in her attendance, and the most punctual of all her associates; and those only who knew her best could well appreciate her worth. They who were permitted to mingle in her devotions, speak of the clearness of her perceptions, the earnestness and sincerity of her petitions, the marked character of her piety, and her strong attachment to her friends.

She was highly favored in sitting under the pastoral care of that eminent servant of God, the late Dr. P. She drank into that spirit which so distinguished him, and she received under his ministration an impress of Divine truth and love that never was effaced; and, though called to leave his Christian watch and charge, and to move with her husband in another and a wider sphere of duty, she never forgot her endeared friend; and her house was ever his home when he came to the city, until his final visit; and, while she, and her husband and children cherished him and his family as their beloved pastor and friend, he always looked upon them as among the most valued members of his flock. Mrs. W. was possessed of a strong intellect, of quick perceptions, and a clear insight into human character, and of a

cultivated mind; and in the family circle, she was a true friend and kind adviser of a beloved husband, and a devoted mother to children gifted like herself, and who delight to speak her praise.

She was peculiarly a domestic woman; and, for a few years past, owing to increasing infirmities, she rarely visited among her friends; yet she was seen a constant attendant on public worship, and in the circle for prayer. Her virtues, therefore, were not so generally known, because her influence was more confined. But, being dead she yet speaketh, as a faithful and devoted servant of Christ, upright and consistent; the sincere and constant friend, the affectionate wife, and the beloved mother; a Christian, sound in doctrine, fervent in piety, and zealous in good works; and while this circle continues, she will live in its remembrance as one of those who best sustained, among its sisters, the spirit of devotion in its hours of prayer.

'Death,' says a distinguished poet, 'loves a shining mark.' Among those of our youthful band, whose eyes sparkle in the bright visions of the morning, whose cheeks glow with the sweet hue of maiden beauty, whose spirits flow out in the light elastic tread, and whose lips are tuned to sing a Saviour's love, none were more bright and lovely than E. W. She made profession of her faith in Christ, and gave evidence, by her conduct, that she delighted in the conversion of her youthful friends. A few months before her death, she was united in marriage to C. D., the object of her choice, a professor of religion, a member of the same church with herself, and with the most pleasing prospects of long continued enjoyment in the sweetest of all domestic relations. But the Lord's ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. He saw best to close those eyes, and to return that beauteous form unto the dust from whence it was taken, and to call, as we trust, the loving spirit home to its divine abode. Blessed be God — though his ways are mysterious, yet we rejoice in the assurance that the Judge of all the earth doeth right — and though we know not now, we may know hereafter, why this fair flower was culled in its opening beauty, and why the Lord thus early gathered her to himself. The wounds

received from such a blow can be healed by that hand alone which inflicts them.

Another death has also occurred since our last report. The son of a former member of this circle, and the husband of one of its children, has been removed, by distressing sickness. He also was a professor of religion. He was an only son and a beloved child, and his loss is deeply felt and regretted.

While with ceaseless course the sun,
Hasted through the former year,
Many souls their race have run,
Never more to meet us here.
Fixed in an eternal state,
They have done with all below;
We, a little longer wait,
But how little none can know.

Other changes of an important character have also taken place in our association. Two of the families connected with it have withdrawn, those of Mr. W. and Dea. S., in consequence of having joined another church, lately formed in the city. Mr. and Mrs. H. also have proposed to withdraw, by reason of their removal from the city; but, as yet, we have not acted on their proposal, in the hope that circumstances may restore them to us again. We feel their absence as valuable and pleasant members, with whom we have had sweet counsel together; but we know, that, wherever they are, they will do good, and what we are deprived of others have gained; so we will not murmur, while we regret their loss.

Since the last report also, there have been four marriages among the children of the circle — Miss E. W., Miss M. H., Mr. W. H., and Mr. G. D. M.

Our families also have been visited with sickness, where death has not ensued, and especially that of Mr. H. Their daughter, during the summer of 1843, was taken with typhus fever while at school, and was brought to the gates of the grave; but, after lying many days insensible, the Lord blessed the means employed for her recovery, and she has been restored to health. The last fall and winter, Mr. H. was afflicted with the same fever, but his life also was spared; and they have

great reason for gratitude to the Lord for his sparing mercies.

In the month of April, 1843, in consequence of the removal of Mr. H.'s family into the country, the place of meeting was transferred to the house of Mr. E., and the Association continued to meet there till the latter part of November of that year, when, by reason of a long journey undertaken by them to the far West, another change took place, and the ladies met at Mr. M.'s, and the gentlemen at Mr. D.'s. This continued until the latter part of the month of March, 1844, when Mr. and Mrs. E. returned, and the meeting was reëstablished at their house, where it has been held, with occasional interruptions, to the present time. All these changes have produced irregularities in our meetings, and occasional deficiences in our records, and on account of it we cannot furnish our usual details, which, however much we may lament, we cannot remedy.

We have reason for gratitude, in the accession to our circle of other members to supply the places of those who have left us. Our addition consists of the families of Mr. B., and Mr. T. — and we trust that they and the older members of the circle will receive and enjoy mutual pleasure and profit in the connection.

Amid all these changes, in the deaths which have occurred, in the families who have withdrawn from us — in the friends who have joined us — in the measure of health we have been favored with — in the sicknesses we have experienced — in the continued and varied mercies we have enjoyed; we have cause for sorrow and joy, yet certainly we have the most abundant cause for gratitude to him who doeth all things well. And, in the words of the Psalmist, let us conclude our Report:—

'Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth forever. Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can shew forth all his praise? Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times. Remember me, O Lord, with the favor that thou bearest unto thy people; O visit me with thy salvation. Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.

Boston, Jan. 7, 1845.